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RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT 4119  
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 2694  
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH 7306  
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 1314  
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DEPARTMENT FOR PA, NEA/ARN, INR/IC/CD, INR/S:STHIBEAULT AND  
JMCCARTER, VOA NEWS CA, NEA/PPD:CBOURGEOIS, DBENZE AND  
AFERNANDEZ, IIP/G/NEA-SA RWINCHESTER  
WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC  
CENTCOM FOR CCPA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: KMDR PREL KPAO OPRC SY

SUBJECT: Damascus Media Reaction: Post-war maneuvering, UN  
Investigation of Hariri assassination, War on terrorism,  
Lebanon, Visit of UK delegation (9-24-25)

¶1. Summary: Syrian papers covered the latest Brammertz Report, focusing on the idea that Syria has been generally cooperative in the U.N. commission's investigation. The papers also covered a meeting between Minister of Foreign Affairs Walid al Mouallem and UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, who "expressed his gratification and satisfaction over the positive outcomes of his latest visit to Damascus and his meeting with President Bashar al-Assad."

Also covered was a secret US intelligence document which states that the invasion of Iraq has spawned a new wave of Islamic radicalism and increased the global threat of terrorism. The document contradicts the Bush Administration's claims that the invasion of Iraq and the ouster of Saddam Hussein have made America safer, not weaker.

The Syrian press also covered a visit to Damascus by a UK delegation. The delegation, headed by a conservative MP, met with Vice Premier Abdullah al Dardari, who briefed the guests about economic reforms that have been achieved by the Syrian government in the past couple of years.

On Lebanon, the papers covered calls by pro-Syria Lebanese politicians for "a national government." Al Baath daily focused on General Aoun's statement describing the parliamentary majority as "illusory" and the government as "illegal."

End of summary.

¶2. Selected Headlines:

"The White House accused publishers of publishing only parts of a classified US intelligence document: Invasion of Iraq has nourished terrorism" (Government-owned Tishreen, 9/25)

"Aoun: The majority is illusory.. the government is illegal" (Government-owned Al Baath, 9/25)

Syrian-British talks: Al-Dardari reviews reform measures with a UK delegation (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 9/25)

Receiving 22 ambassadors at the Vatican, the Pope expresses his respect for Islam and reiterates the necessity of dialogue to overcome tensions (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 9/26)

[Iraqi President Jalal] Talibani wants a long-term US presence in Iraq (Government-owned Al-Baath, 9/26)

### 13. Editorial Block Quotes:

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"The US Foreign Policy Opera"

Khalf al Jarad, Chief Editor of government-owned Tishreen, commented (9/25): "[Writers and analysts] are mistaken when they imagine that there is a conflict between opposing camps among the components of the (US) policy. That is because they see issues only on the surface, and do not see the essence of the harmonic operation in distributing missions and roles [among the Administration's figures.]"

"A handful of the US media that control newspapers, magazines, movie companies and TV networks help form a consensus of public opinion vis-a-vis issues related to the Middle East"

"The widely-spread negative, simplified concepts about Arabs and Muslims [created by the US media] have facilitated taking... decisions in the Arab region, such as the 1958 intervention in Lebanon, the repeated aggressions against Iraq in the 1990s and

invading and occupying it in 2003. And now these concepts are paving the way for further attacks and wars against other Arab and Muslim states, under different pretexts."

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"Un-announced facts"

Muhammad Khei al Jamali, an editorialist in government-owned Al-Thawra, wrote (9/25): There are two explanations that elucidate why the US was taken by surprise on 9/11, despite the fact that it has developed technology and military equipment, as well as intelligence personnel all across the world: intelligence nonfeasance, or intelligence and intentional (Administration) silence, to allow things to happen.

"Since the first possibility is too weak to be considered, the more realistic and convincing one is that the US Administration colluded to allow the incident to occur, to become a pretext for the new strategy set by the Neo-Conservatives, in order to lay the foundation for the unipolar system, which converted America from a democracy to a totalitarian empire that dominates the entire world with oppressive armed force, under the auspices of combating terrorism....

"This only proves that the entire Neo-Conservative Administration closed its eyes in order to harvest the fruits of the incident: occupying Afghanistan and Iraq, and shaping the world according to its strategic interests."

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Fertilization of Terrorism

Ali al Kassem, an op-ed writer in al Government-owned al-Thawra, wrote on 9/26: " So far the US Administration has not commented on the intelligence report which states that the invasion of Iraq has increased the global threat of terrorism.... This means that the premeditated plan of the US Administration has not changed [and will not change] even if new warnings are issued daily,

unless its goals have been accomplished."

"To face all of this, it is imperative now to have an international position ... to stop the American impetuousness, whose price is paid by humankind, and to reconsider [its consequences] which, fertilized by US policy, threatens to spread even more terror than we have seen so far."

Corbin